

ED'S IDEA

I don't know
I might
eat supper first
tomorrow
and save breakfast for later

-- Dan Leone

Durham NH

THREE WOMEN

Captain Tom's mother tried to stab him when he was 17.

Captain Tom went AWOL from the Army when he was 19.
He stole a car and drove to San Francisco.
He took acid 1,000 times,
saw little men with bayonets
marching out of the wallpaper
toward him.

Captain Tom got married when he was 22.
He couldn't stop punching his wife in the eye.
She left him when he was 23.
He was committed to a State Mental Hospital.

After Captain Tom got out of the hospital,
he moved into his grandmother's garage.
His grandmother immediately
covered her living room walls
with pictures of Jesus
and posters that declared "God Is Love" and "Jesus Is
Lord."

MAKING AMERICA STRONG

We worked nights as machine operators
at Goodstone Aircraft Company, where we made parts
for the Air Force's new bomber, the K-20.
In the parking lot, before work and during lunchbreak,
we drank and smoked dope and snorted chemicals.
At work we wore sunglasses
and danced in front of our machines.
We picked up bomber parts and blew through them
as if they were saxophones.

We stalked each other with squirt guns,
screaming and laughing and staggering.
We played with the overhead crane,
hoisting each other's tool boxes to the ceiling.
We unscrewed knobs off of machine handles
and threw them around like baseballs.
Our foreman sneaked drinks
from the bottle of vodka in his toolbox
and paced about the shop in a daze.
We respected our foreman.
He'd given us some valuable advice.
"Whatever you do," he'd warned us over and over, "don't
join the Air Force and fly a K-20. It's gonna CRASH."

A THREAT

My fellow workers and I
operate machines that cut steel blocks.

As the machines cut the steel,
my fellow workers like to stare and laugh at each other.
They are ready to piss on each other's graves.

They fear me.
They call me crazy.
They don't like the poetry I read.
They don't like the paintings I have hung
on the board behind my machine.
They look at me
like they want to cut my balls off.

Tomorrow I think I will start bringing roses to work.
Each day I will stand a rose in a jar of water
on the workbench behind my machine.
I want to really terrify my fellow workers
this time.

AT GOODSTONE AIRCRAFT COMPANY

The blacks and the bikers
operated machines next to each other.

The bikers yelled nigger jokes to each other
and plastered their rollaway toolboxes
with Confederate flag stickers.

The blacks had anxiety attacks
and read Bibles
and found the hangman's nooses that the bikers hung
from the beams above the blacks' machines.